

**State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations**  
**INFORMATION RESOURCES MANAGEMENT BOARD**  
**Meeting Report**

Date/Place—November 21, 2002/Department of Administration Building, Providence

Members/Representatives Present—Howard Boksenbaum, OLIS (Acting Chair); Ellen Alexander, DOC; Maggie Dziadkiewicz, OHE; Michael Hogan, RI House Policy, Janet Levesque, RILOCAT; Thomas Mullaney, DOA—Budget Office; M. Teresa Paiva-Weed, RI Senate; Marvin Perry, DLT; Joan Ress Reeves, Library Board of RI; Bruce Reirden, Care New England

Members/Representatives Absent—Edward Giroux, Secretary of State's Office; Nicholas Leporacci, MHRH; Raymond McKay, City of Warwick; Dexter Merry, Public Telecommunications Authority; James R. Monti, Jr., West Warwick School District; Joseph Pangborn, DOE; Christopher Wessells, URI; Don Wolfe, Member-at-Large

Other Attendees—James Berard, DOC; Carol Ciotola (recording secretary), OLIS; Joan Gammon, Carrie Gott, and Christen Hunter, New England Interactive (NEI)

Approval of October 24, 2002, Meeting Report—**Mr. Reirden moved to approve the October 24, 2002, Meeting Report as presented. By Board consensus, the October 24, 2002, Meeting Report was approved.**

Old Business: Chief Information Officer's Job Description—Mr. Boksenbaum distributed a job description prepared by Mr. Reirden. He noted that though this position is provided for in state law through the creation of OLIS, the text has been altered over the years; and the Chief Information Officer's position refers almost exclusively to Library Services.

- Ms. Reeves noted there was no mention of Library Services within this document. Mr. Boksenbaum explained that he was supposed to modify this draft to integrate language about Library Services but did not do so. Mr. Reirden felt this document to be the best description of a Chief Information Officer as he knows it, tempered with what he knows of the IRMB.
- Mr. Boksenbaum suggested that the Library Board of Rhode Island review this document to incorporate appropriate language having to do with the Library Services component.
- Ms. Reeves said that this Board must decide whether or not to remain "married" to this concept of the Chief Information Officer overseeing Library Services. For the present, she assumed that this unit would remain within OLIS. Mr. Boksenbaum said that to date, OLIS's status has not changed. If changes do occur, he felt they would not happen immediately but would evolve over a period of time. OLIS is currently an organization with a vacant Chief Information Officer position. There is no legislation that sets forth a job description for this position, nor is information resources management included, except to state that OLIS must provide staff support to the IRMB. The legislation also states that the Chief Information Officer is the Executive Director of OLIS, but the language included only sets forth library duties. He hopes that the new Governor will choose to appoint a Chief Information Officer; and in that regard, he felt that this Board should provide input.
- Mr. Berard thought that the draft document was fantastic. He felt that the Chief Information Officer should be separate and apart, and thought that the technical responsibilities were paramount compared with the added duties of running Library Services.
- Ms. Reeves pointed out that librarians dispense information. Mr. Berard replied that they do not handle the technology part. Ms. Levesque noted that the Cumberland Library does employ a librarian to handle information technology needs. Mr. Berard noted that of all the states he has researched, the role of the Chief Information Officer was solely to take care of all programming and networking.
- Mr. Boksenbaum felt that to have an effective Chief Information Officer, this position must be part of the Governor's Cabinet, not the Department of Administration.
- Mr. Reirden explained that this document was compiled from a number of job descriptions from state governments and large organizations. In his experience as a Chief Information Officer, he included in this draft what he felt a Governor would require for a Chief Information Officer's position. This is an ideal in terms of what a job description would have in terms of functions, powers and duties. He

noted that the Federal Government now has a Chief Information Officer, which is a new position and which takes the same approach as this document. He then reviewed the contents of the draft, including: job purpose, position summary, powers and functions, actions of the employees of OLIS, information coordination, job duties and responsibilities, position requirements, and education and experience.

- Ms. Reeves thought it odd that the Chief Information Officer chairs the Board that advises the Chief Information Officer. Mr. Boksenbaum agreed. Ms. Reeves asked who appoints the Chief Information Officer. Mr. Mullaney replied that the Director of the Department of Administration appoints the Chief Information Officer with the approval of the Governor. Mr. Reirden felt it would be more appropriate to have the Governor appoint a Chief Information Officer.
- Mr. Boksenbaum felt this draft document to be an effective statement about what this Board wants from an executive officer, then cited the following gaps: planning, a policy-level aspect, and aspects about information that are not technology oriented. These gaps will need to be addressed.
- Mr. Perry asked the membership to consider whether or not the three units within OLIS are a good fit. Mr. Perry felt this to be a good document for consideration by top officials. It will also be important to think about the services being provided. It may be necessary to create a new model to identify customers, determine needs and then determine how best to meet those needs.
- Senator Paiva-Weed noted that libraries have worked hard to attain the status and recognition that Barbara Weaver brought to them. She felt that the oversight capacity of this position would need to be addressed. She thought it might be best to start with oversight for the Executive Branch. She also felt that a policy decision would need to be made with respect to the status of Library Services to insure its importance. Addressing Mr. Reirden's comment about the state's pay structure with respect to this position, she suggested that a contract much like the one between Dr. Nolan and the State be developed, which was necessary in order to attract a doctor that would be willing to give up his/her practice to oversee the Department of Health. For the Chief Information Officer's position, she felt there was room for creativity and did not feel this could be accomplished with a political appointment. With respect to the pay structure for information technology employees, she noted that it has been her experience that many times it had been necessary to hire consultants, because the state either could not meet the salary requirements or did not have the FTE to fill a vacancy. Mr. Reirden noted that hiring consultants could cost two to three times more than hiring an employee. Senator Paiva-Weed agreed but noted that this method has been a necessary alternative in the past.
- Mr. Reirden noted that if this Board wants to be progressive, this is an area that is "hot" in today's economy. Mr. Boksenbaum encouraged members to think "in the extreme." Although it will be necessary to acknowledge how doable this task is, the Board should not be constrained by it.
- Ms. Reeves asked how Library Services and Information Technology would fit in. Mr. Boksenbaum explained that there is a natural affinity between these two units; much of what is being discussed could be written in terms of information management without technology. Within OLIS there are those who gather and organize and deliver information, and there are those who make that delivery possible through information technology.
- Mr. Reirden offered to incorporate into the draft any additional information from the membership. Ms. Reeves said that she would ask the Library Board to prepare language for inclusion.
- Mr. Boksenbaum noted that the concept of what the state needs to get out of information technology is now at a crossroad: How important will it be? Is it going to get the importance it needs or not? This would be a policy decision. The question about Library Services being part of the Chief Information Officer's position would also be a policy decision.
- Senator Paiva-Weed cited the need to recognize that while the state can be proud of its libraries, it should be embarrassed about its information technology. Ms. Reeves agreed that libraries around the state are in good shape, but the programs within Library Services are not—too few people to accomplish what needs to get done.
- Mr. Boksenbaum asked members to forward comments on the draft to Mr. Reirden. At Ms. Reeves' request, Mr. Boksenbaum will provide the Chief of Library Services with a copy of this document.

Portal Review Committee Report (distributed)—Ms. Gott welcomed Joan Gammon back to work after a two-month absence due to illness. She has since made a complete recovery and is currently transitioning into her new position as General Manager of RI.gov. Ms. Gott also introduced Christen Hunter, who is serving as Project Manager for RI.gov on a temporary basis. Ms. Hunter presented the following projects:

Secretary of State and RI.gov NEI Payment Engine for Uniform Commercial Code (UCC) Searches Fee Schedule Recommendation: This project would allow Rhode Island businesses to pay for UCC searches online using credit cards.

- Senator Paiva-Weed asked about this process. Ms. Gott explained that NEI and the state have a long-term contract to provide e-government services with an e-commerce component that any state agency or municipality can use. For example, DEM is currently utilizing NEI's payment engine. Since the state does not allow for the collection of merchant fees, DEM collections are deposited in NEI's account and ACH'd to the state's general fund. Senator Paiva-Weed asked if an RFP had been issued for this project. Mr. Boksenbaum replied that the state did go out to bid on an RFP, and the evaluation committee included the State Controller. The General Treasurer is also working closely with RI.gov.
- When asked by the Senator if the courts were aware of this service, Mr. Hogan explained that they were and were actually in the process of allowing for online collection of fees by credit card. He reiterated that the state is not paying merchant fees; those fees are coming out of NEI's account. The portal is self-funded. Users pay for the benefit of using the service.

Ms. Hunter presented a project overview, explaining how the payment engine, EDS software, and the Secretary of State's system would interact. RI.gov staff has met with staff of the Secretary of State's Office, and this proposal has been presented to the Portal Review Committee. This service will include a \$1 per transaction convenience fee.

- Mr. Boksenbaum stated that the Portal Review Committee voted to recommend that the IRMB approve the fee schedule recommendation.
- Ms. Hunter noted that the PRC discussed the use of credit cards and/or e-checks with respect to this project. She explained that eventually both methods would be offered. At this point this service will allow for credit card payments online; e-check availability will be phased in later.
- Senator Paiva-Weed asked who would use this service. Ms. Gammon explained that these are lien filings, mostly searches for equipment (tangible property) of businesses.
- Ms. Levesque asked what the regular fee was for these filings. Ms. Hunter explained that the Secretary of State has reduced the current filing fees (either \$16 or \$32) to \$8 per online filing. This service would be most appealing to businesses, legal services, and banks.
- Ms. Gott noted that this service is the top e-government service across the nation. There is a very high adoption rate for the electronic delivery option.
- Based on this presentation, Senator Paiva-Weed had several concerns; these were addressed as follows:
  - ∞ Ms. Gott explained that convenience fees cover the cost of NEI's maintenance, hosting and e-development of the portal, and to provide additional free services.
  - ∞ Mr. Boksenbaum explained that the state went out to bid with certain criteria, including the condition that there be no cost to the state for providing online services. This portal is entirely self-supporting. Five bids were received, and there was an extensive selection process involved. The master contract resulted from the bidding process, which sets the rules for individual agencies to have sub-agreements with NEI to produce particular services online. The IRMB is the controlling body for setting these fees. Other fees have been approved for services, such as: boat registration renewals, motor vehicle registration renewals, marine license renewals, sales and tax filings, and DMV driver record purchases.
  - ∞ Ms. Gott explained that Legislative mandates are presented to the portal through the respective departments involved. Mr. Boksenbaum will check with the Secretary of State's Office to insure that the statutory status of the fees involved have been legislatively passed.

- Mr. Hogan explained that this particular project is an example of how costs can be reduced when transactions are conducted online.
- Ms. Gott noted that this project would provide an opportunity for the Board to monitor a service that has decreased the cost of doing business if done online, as compared with services that have increased the cost of doing business if done online.

**Ms. Reeves moved to approve The NEI Payment Engine for UCC Searches Fee Schedule Recommendation—\$1 per transaction. Ms. Levesque seconded the motion, and it was approved by a majority vote, with one abstention—Senator Paiva-Weed.**

*Taxation and RI.gov Sales and Withholding Tax—IVR (Interactive Voice Response) Fee Schedule Recommendation*—Ms. Hunter presented an overview of this project. Basically, Rhode Island businesses would be able to file and pay sales and withholding taxes for various filing periods using a telephone and telephone keypad. RI.gov will take over for the current vendor in six months, and will provide this service at a lower cost. The Division requested that the convenience fee be less than \$1 if at all possible. RI.gov complied with that request by proposing a 95-cent per transaction fee. This fee will be taken from the statutory fees collected, since there is legislation in place to allow the Division to handle convenience fees in this manner. The Division feels that there would be substantial savings internally using this method, and it will also help to improve the online adoption rate.

- Mr. Boksenbaum noted that the Portal Review Committee recommended Board approval.
- Ms. Gott said that numbers drives this service; therefore, it can easily be done by phone. If it were a more complex application, it would be more prohibitive. She explained that a potential user would first have to register with the Division of Taxation either online or in person prior to using the IVR system.
- Ms. Hunter noted that since this service currently exists, RI.gov has a good idea as to how many people currently use it.

**Ms. Reeves moved to approve the Sales and Withholding Tax—IVR—Fee Schedule Recommendation—95 cents per transaction. Mr. Perry seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.**

*Five-Year Plan*—No discussion.

*Presentation: Communications Working Group*—Due to the lateness of the hour, this presentation was deferred.

*New Business*—Senator Paiva-Weed said that she would share the events of this meeting with Senator Alves and recommend that he be represented at these meetings. Ms. Gott thanked her for the opportunity to provide information about the portal and offered to meet with her to review NEI's portal contract with the State.

*Next Meeting*—Thursday, December 19, Conference Room “B” (2d floor) of the DOA Building.